

WELCOME TO TRANSITION HOUSE

TIME TO RELAX AND HAVE FUN



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Time to Relax and Have Fun

"Play is the highest form of research." - Albert Einstein

"If you want creative workers, given them enough time to play." - John Cleese

Rest

- According to the centers for disease control, insufficient sleep is associated with a number of chronic diseases and conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and depression. We're also learning that drowsy driving can be as dangerous- and as preventable- as driving while intoxicated.
- At some point exhaustion became a symbol of success. In today's culture, we too often equate being exhausted with dedication, strong work ethic, achievement, etc.
- The reality – without sufficient rest, productivity declines. Though there may be an appearance of activity – actual productivity is compromised along with an increased likelihood of more mistakes/accidents.
- Some important questions to ponder:
 - Do I only feel like I've given enough when I'm completely exhausted?
 - Is this the expectation of my supervisors/peers?
 - Are you willing to consider and actually change – before your health, relationships, life are compromised?
 - What messages are we sending to others – co-workers, family members – especially younger children, etc.?
 - How much time are we spending judging others for not 'giving it their all'?
 - Are naps for slackers? (yet look at other cultures who embrace 'napping/rest.')
- If attitudes towards rest do not change, the next generations will see an even greater risk for illnesses and addiction. Consider the 'schedule' of a 'typical family' –
 - As soon as the alarm sounds, Hit the ground running, rushing, grabbing something to eat/drink on the run
 - Keeping up with school work while being ever aware of the many other obligations to come
 - Parents try to focus at work, yet still trying to remember their obligations and their kids
 - Rushing to after school activities while parents are trying to be at their own meetings/working late
 - Grabbing something to eat/drink on the run
 - Collapsing on the couch – staring into space, at the TV/phones/computer
 - When attempts to rest make its way in to the day, the racing thoughts of the things that were forgotten, the things to come rushing in
 - Time for Bed
- So, how do we rest when rest does not appear feasible?

Play

- Have you ever tried to do something fun and it just wasn't cause you are so exhausted? The challenge is **Play without Rest = Work!**
- The phrase Adult Play may bring to mind less than wholesome images. This should not be the case. Play is a critical element of holistic wellness. Dr. Stuart Brown is a psychiatrist, clinical researcher and founder of the National Institute for play. He is also the author of *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination and Invigorates the Soul*. He has found that play shapes our brain, helps us foster empathy, helps us navigate complex social groups, and is at the core of creativity and innovation.
- Dr. Stuart Brown proposes one of the properties of play is that play is apparently purposeless. Basically this means that we play for the sake of play. We do it because it's fun and we want to.
- Dr. Brene Brown talks about how in today's culture, our self-worth is tied to our net worth, and we base our worthiness on our level of productivity.
- We judge rest and play. We shame ourselves and others for engaging in "mindless" activities or taking time to rest. These elements are necessary for health. When was the last time you truly rested? What did it look like? What activities do you do for "mindless" fun?
- Dr. Stuart Brown argues that play is not an option. He writes, "The opposite of play is not work- **the opposite of play is depression.**" He explains, "Respecting our biologically programmed need for play can transform work. It can bring



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back excitement and newness to our job. Play helps us deal with difficulties, provides a sense of expansiveness, promotes master of our craft, and is an essential part of the creative process. Most important, true play that comes from our inner needs and desires is the only path to finding lasting joy and satisfaction in our work. In the long run, work does not work without play.”

Caffeine and Other Substance Abuse

- Caffeine has become the acceptable ‘drug of choice’ for those who continue to push beyond healthy limits. For many it started with a cup of coffee in the morning.... then perhaps a second at work. When it stopped being enough, add a few more. Then the discovery of Energy Drinks! It assures us we can do more, sleep less and be superhuman. They forgot to mention it can also compromise health and more and more people are dying from the damage these magical drinks do to the human body.
- Alcohol and other substances are often used to relax or rest. Who wouldn’t need a ‘little help’ from alcohol or more? Who could blame you?
- At some point, if we wish to live and live a healthier life, we must recognize the reality that big business is making a fortune from our unwillingness to care for ourselves!

Balancing Life with Rest and Play

- Do we really have to wait until we die to “Rest in Peace?”
- If we want to live a healthy, well-balanced life, we have to become intentional about cultivating sleep and play, and about letting go of exhaustion as a status symbol and productivity as self-worth.

What does life look like when You Say You’re Doing Good?

- Here are a few things that typically create a sense of wellness in life: Sleep, working out, healthy food, cooking, time off, weekends away, going to church, being present with family, a sense of control over our \$\$, meaningful work that doesn’t consume us, time to piddle, time with family and close friends, and time to just hang out.

Create a List of Ingredients for Healthy Play

- So what will it take? Work together and generate a list of ingredients that will help you enhance Joy and Meaning in Life
- Nap Time!

Scheduling Play and Rest

- If what matters to us is what we’re concerned about, then play and rest are important. If what matters to us is what other people think or say or value, then it’s back to exhaustion and producing for self-worth.
- This may require an intentional mindfulness until this becomes a part of your norm. Work and responsibilities typically will attempt to force rest and play aside.

Wrap Up

“You can discover more about a person in an hour of play, than in a year of conversation.” - Plato

“Every person needs to take one day away.”

A day in which one consciously separates the past from the future. Jobs, family, employers, and friends can exist one day without any one of us, and if our egos permit us to confess, they could exist eternally in our absence. Each person deserves a day away in which no problems are confronted, no solutions searched for. Each of us needs to withdraw from the cares which will not withdraw from us. – Maya Angelou



Facilitator's Guide:

FOLLOW UP ON HOMEWORK:

- Questionnaire that would provide yourself and facilitators with useful information to help make this a more meaningful learning experience.
- Start developing your Worthiness List.
- Be mindful... Record the times over the next week when you've been able to be more authentic. How did that impact your sense of well-being?
- Be mindful... When your Perfectionism button is 'pushed,' try a new behavior. Record how it works.
- Develop your own list of Hope Energizing Activities and note how it impacts you.

BREAK UP INTO GROUPS OF 2-3:

1. In your group generate a list of ingredients that will help you enhance Joy and Meaning in Life
2. What are action steps you can realistically take in improve your life balance? How to get more sleep or increased play time?
3. Which do you feel is more important? Rest or Play?
4. What are healthier alternatives to caffeine and other substances that are often used to manage stress and exhaustion?
5. How do we work to change the culture that promotes exhaustion as a badge of honor and use anything necessary to get more done in less time?
6. How do other cultures approach the concepts of work, rest and play? How does their productivity compare to ours?

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:

- Monitor your rest and play. How are you doing? Where can you improve? What changes have you made/are making?

